

DEA Launches New Educational Website for Parents:

www.GetSmartAboutDrugs.com

GetSmartAboutDrugs.com was developed as a resource for parents and caregivers to help them identify drug abuse, prevent children from using drugs, and find resources for substance abuse prevention in an informative, non-technical manner.

The website was introduced February 11 at the annual National Leadership Forum of one of DEA's partner organizations, the Community Anti-Drugs Coalition of America. Speaking to forum participants, Acting Administrator Michele M. Leonhart said, "In this fight, information is power, and DEA's new website has current, accurate, and practical information about how to spot signs of abuse, identify drugs and paraphernalia, and how to talk to teens about drugs." GetSmartAboutDrugs.com is a follow-up to DEA's highly popular site for teens, www.JustThinkTwice.com.

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DEA Launches New Educational Website for Parents

FEB 11 -- (WASHINGTON, DC) -- Today the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) announced its new educational website for parents, www.GetSmartAboutDrugs.com. The website was developed to be a resource for parents and caregivers to help them identify drug abuse, prevent children from using drugs, and find resources for substance abuse prevention. The site is designed to speak to parents and caregivers of middle-school, high-school, and college-aged children in an informative and non-technical manner.

The website was introduced at the annual National Leadership Forum of one of the DEA's partner organizations, the Community Anti-Drugs Coalition of America (CADCA) in National Harbor, Maryland. Speaking to forum participants, "DEA wants to share our knowledge about drugs with parents, teachers, and all those who care about keeping our children safe," said Acting Administrator Michele M. Leonhart. "In this fight, information is power, and DEA's new website has current, accurate, and practical information about how to spot signs of abuse, identify drugs and paraphernalia, and how to talk to teens about drugs. With just a few clicks, parents will be confident and ready to help their kids resist drugs."

The parent website is a follow-up to DEA's highly popular site for teens, www.JustThinkTwice.com. Educated and involved parents are an important part of the solution to the problem of drug abuse in America. But the Partnership for a Drug-Free America's 2007 Partnership Attitude Tracking Survey found that a majority of parents of middle school children (51%) report they need more tools and information to help their kids deal with drugs and alcohol.

Having the facts about drug use by kids today is important, because:

- Today's kids are more likely to begin abusing drugs with prescription and over-the-counter drugs like Vicodin and Xanax than with marijuana. Users of www.GetSmartAboutDrugs.com will learn that parents and family members are the main source of these drugs for kids.

- Among children as young as 11, inhaling the fumes from common household products to get high is popular and can be fatal even for first time users. Parents can use a visual glossary to discover the hidden dangers in your home.
- Being caught in possession of illegal drugs can prohibit a young person from qualifying for federal college loans. Parents can find out about the legal, health, financial and social consequences of drug abuse.

DEA is the nation's authoritative source on current drug trends. Because of the investigations it conducts and the seizures it makes, DEA has real-time, localized information about what drugs can be found in America's neighborhoods. Because its regional laboratories regularly keep DEA apprised of what the labs receive, DEA can provide the public with accurate details about substances. This information is put to use in this website's visual glossary, which contains searchable drug and paraphernalia information, photos and descriptions. If a parent finds an unknown substance in a child's room or car, he or she can identify the substance by searching the glossary's entries for powders, leaves, liquids or other characteristics.

DEA's www.GetSmartAboutDrugs.com was designed and built and is hosted by Rock Creek Strategic Marketing (RCSM) of Chevy Chase, Maryland, who worked closely with the DEA to strategize, design and develop a site that was more than just a series of web pages but instead was an experience that was relevant, easy-to-use, accessible, and most importantly, engaging for the target audience. The overall look of the site was designed to communicate the seriousness of the topic area while softening the overall visual experience to help communicate on a more personal level with parents and caregivers. Says Scott Johnson, Co-Founder and Principal of RCSM, "Important Government technology initiatives such as this must be carefully branded and deliver a superior user experience to be fully successful. It is the lack of these that often causes worthy government programs to be unrecognized and underutilized. As a parent, this site speaks to me, and effectively delivers the information, resources and encouragement that I need as I fight to keep my own kids free from drugs."

In support of the www.GetSmartAboutDrugs.com website, DEA has released a 47-page booklet, *Prescription for Disaster: How Teens Abuse Medicine*, which focuses on the dangers of prescription drugs. This reference tool includes, like the website, a photo glossy of many kinds of drugs, along with details about their forms, effects and sources. It also includes basic information about prescription and over-the-counter medicines and ideas for what parents can do to educate their children about the dangers of drugs.

Copies of the booklet can be downloaded from www.GetSmartAboutDrugs.com or obtained by contacting DEA's office of Demand Reduction.